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CASE

OF

Mrs. *CLIVE.*

[Price Six Pence.]

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Submitted to the PUBLICK.

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IN order to put an End to ſome falſe Reports, which have been raiſed in Relation to my not acting this Seaſon, as well as to beſpeak the Favour of the Publick, I have, by the Advice of my Friends, ventured to addreſs my ſelf to them, from whom I have received many and great Marks of

of Favour, and whoſe further Protection I now ſtand in need of.

I know Appeals of this Nature, which relate to Diſputes that happen at a Theatre, are by ſome thought preſuming and impertinent, ſuppoſing they are too trifling to demand Attention: But, as I perſuade my ſelf, that Injuſtice and Oppreſſion are by no means thought Matters of Indifference by any who have Humanity, I hope I ſhall not be thought to take too great a Liberty. I am the more encouraged to hope this from Experience; it having been obſerved, that thoſe Performers, who have had the Happineſs to pleaſe on the Stage, and who never did any thing to offend the Publick, whenever they have been injured by thoſe who preſided over Theatres, have ſeldom, if ever, failed of Redreſs upon repreſenting the Hardſhips they met with: And, as I at this time, apprehend my ſelf

to

to be greatly oppreſſed by the Managers of both Theatres, I hope I ſhall be juſtified in taking this Method of acquainting the Publick with my Caſe, ſubmitting it to their Determination.

Before the Diſputes happened betwixt the Manager of *Drury-Lane* Theatre and his Actors, I had articled for Five Years to receive Three Hundred Pounds a Year, tho' another Performer on that Stage received for Seven Years Five Hundred Guineas, *per* Year; and at the Expiration of my Agreements the Manager offered me an additional Salary to continue at that Theatre.

And ſince I have mentioned thoſe Diſputes, which ended ſo greatly to the Diſadvantage of the Actors, I muſt beg Leave to endeavour to ſet that Matter in a clear Light, which hitherto has been miſrepreſented to the Publick: I think my ſelf obliged

to

to this, as the Hardſhips I at preſent labour under are owing to that Diſagreement; if any think I treat this Matter too ſeriouſly, I hope they will remember, that however trifling ſuch Things may appear to them, to me, who am ſo much concerned in 'em, they are of great Importance, ſuch as my Liberty and Livelihood depend on.

As only two Theatres were authoriſed, the Managers thought it was in their Power to reduce the Incomes of thoſe Performers, who could not live independant of their Profeſſion; but in order to make this appear with a better Face to the Town, it was agreed to complain of the Actors Salaries being too great, and accordingly a falſe Account was publiſhed of them in the daily Papers, by whom I will not ſay: Whether, or no, ſome particular Salaries were ſo, I will not pretend to determine; yet, in the whole,

they

they did not amount to more than had been allowed for many Years, when the Theatre was under a frugal and exact Regulation; when the Managers punctually fulfilled, not only all Engagements to their Actors, but to every other Person concerned in the Theatre, and raised very considerable Fortunes for themselves.

But supposing the Expence of the Theatre too high, I am very certain it was not the Actors refusing to submit to a proper Reduction of them, which made so many of them quit the Stage, but from great Hardships they underwent, and greater which they feared would happen from an Agreement supposed to be concluded betwixt the two Managers, which made 'em apprehend, that if they submitted to act under such Agreements, they must be absolutely in the Managers Power; and the Event has proved

that their Fears were not ill-grounded, as I doubt not but I ſhall make appear.

When the Actors Affairs obliged 'em to return to the Theatres laſt Winter, under ſuch Abatements of their Salaries as hardly afforded the greater Part of them a Subſiſtence, I was offered, by the Manager of *Drury-Lane* Theatre, ſuch Terms as bore no Proportion to what he gave other Performers, or to thoſe he had offered me at the beginning of the Seaſon. They were ſuch as I was advis'd not to accept, becauſe it was known they were propoſed for no reaſon but to inſult me, and make me ſeek for better at the other Theatre; for I knew it had been ſettled, by ſome dark Agreement, that Part of the Actors were to go to *Covent-Garden* Theatre, and others to *Drury-Lane*; I did, indeed, apprehend I ſhould meet

with

with better Terms at *Covent-Garden*, becauſe that Manager had made many Overtures to get me into his Company the preceding Seaſon, and many times before: But when I apply'd to him, he offered me exactly the ſame which I had refuſed at the other Theatre, and which I likewiſe rejected, but was perſuaded to accept ſome very little better, rather than ſeem obſtinate in not complying as well as others, and yielded ſo far to the Neceſſity of the Time, as to Act under a much leſs Salary than ſeveral other Performers on that Stage, and ſubmitted to pay a Sum of Money for my Benefit, notwithſtanding I had had one clear of all Expence for Nine Years before; an Advantage the firſt Performers had been thought to merit for near Thirty Years, and had grown into a Cuſtom.

When I was fixed at that Theatre I determined to ſtay there; I did, in all things which related to my Profeſſion, ſubmit intirely to that Manager's Direction, and, with the help of other principal Performers, did greatly promote his Intereſt, as was evident from the Audiences after we went to Act there; but I found, by his Behaviour to me, it was deſigned I ſhould not continue with him, but return the next Seaſon to *Drury-Lane*.

The Agreements betwixt that Manager and me were verbal, but made before two Gentlemen of Character and Fortune, on whom I muſt depend for the fulfilling of them; they were for one Year. At the end of the Acting-ſeaſon the Manager ſent an Office-keeper to me with ſome Salary that was due, who required a Receipt in full; I told him a very great

Part

Part of my Agreements were yet due, and requeſted to ſee the Manager, who came and acknowledged them, and promiſed to bring one of the Gentlemen who was preſent at our Ingagements in a Day or two and pay me, and then he ſaid he had done with me; but he has not paid me, nor have I ever ſeen him ſince, or as much as heard from him.

It has always been a Cuſtom in Theatres, that if ever any Actor or Actreſs was to be diſcharged, or their Allowance leſſen'd, they were acquainted with it at the End of the Seaſon; the Reaſon of this will appear to be the giving them a proper Notice to provide for themſelves: This the Manager of *Covent-Garden* did to all his Company whom he deſigned to diſcharge, or whoſe Allowance was to be leſſen'd, except to me, which made me actually then conclude he determined

mined I ſhould continue with him, 'till I was undeceived by his Play-Bills with the Names of other Actreſſes in Parts I uſed to perform; ſo that he has not only broke thro' the Cuſtoms of the Theatre, but thoſe in practice almoſt every where, in diſmiſſing me, and has done me a real Injury in ſuch an unprecedented Act of Injuſtice; for had I been informed of his Deſign at the End of the Seaſon, I could have made Terms to have acted in *Ireland*, where I had met with moſt uncommon Civilities, and received very great Advantages, which I ſhall ever remember with the utmoſt Gratitude, and take this and every other Opportunity to acknowledge.

As I have ſaid, it has been a Cuſtom to give Actors Notice of a Diſcharge: I muſt at the ſame time obſerve, That it never was a Cuſtom

to

to discharge any, but upon Neglect of their Business, or such as were obnoxious to the Publick; this Maxim extended even to those of the lowest Class; but to those, on whose Performances the Town had been pleased to stamp a Value, by their Indulgence and Applause, the Stage was always a Support, even after Age or any Accident had made 'em incapable of their Profession; for the then Patentees thought it as great a Piece of Insolence to deprive the Publick of their Pleasures, as of Cruelty and Injustice to deny those a Subsistence who had contributed towards 'em; for they knew and acknowledged, that the Publick was the only Support of all, consequently had an indisputable Right to be pleased in the best manner possible.

It is pretended by the Managers, that they have the same Right to discharge

charge an Actor that a Master has to turn away a Servant, than which nothing can be more false and absurd; for, when a Master dismisses a Servant, there are many thousands besides to apply to; but when the Managers dismiss an Actor, where are they to apply? It is unlawful to act any where but with them; Necessity or Inclination brings every one to the Stage; if the former happens to be the Case, they will not readily find an Employment; and if the latter, they will not be fit for one; so that it will appear an Act of great Injustice and Oppression. If it should be objected, That the Actors Demands are so exorbitant, that the Managers cannot comply with 'em? I have already endeavoured to show, that tho' two or three Salaries might be thought so in general, they did not amount to more than had been allowed

allowed, and very conſiderable Profits ariſing to the Patentees. But there is a very melancholy Inſtance, that the Actors Demands is not the Reaſon of diſmiſſing 'em, but the Will of the Manager alone; ſince laſt Seaſon an Actor and Actreſs returned to *Drury-Lane* under ſuch Abatements as that Manager thought proper, and ſuch as were in no degree equal to their Merit; and yet, at the beginning of this Seaſon, were diſmiſſed, after having been from their Infancy on the Stage, and having no other Profeſſions to live by, and very numerous Families to ſupport.

The Manager of *Drury-Lane*, tho' he can't but know I am diſengag'd from the other Theatre, has not made any Application to me to act with him, which he has done to ſeveral others who quitted that Stage at the Time I did: The Reaſons which

obliged me to leave him ſtill ſubſiſt: He owes me a Hundred and Sixty Pounds, twelve Shillings, which he has acknowledged to be juſtly due, and promiſed Payment of it by laſt *Chriſtmas* to a Perſon of too great Conſequence for me to mention here, the greater Part of it Money I expended for Cloaths for his Uſe. He offer'd me, laſt Seaſon, not near half as much as he afterwards agreed to give another Performer, and leſs than he then gave to ſome others in his Company; ſo that I muſt conclude, as every one knows there are Agreements betwixt the Managers, that there is a Deſign to diſtreſs me, and reduce me to ſuch Terms as I cannot comply with.

I am ſorry I am reduced to ſay any thing in favour of myſelf; but, as I think I merit as much as another Performer, and the Managers are

ſo

ſo deſirous to convince me of the contrary, I hope I ſhall be excuſed; eſpecially when I declare, that at this time, I am not in the leaſt vain of my Profeſſion.

As to my Performances, the Audience are the only proper Judges: But I may venture to affirm, That my Labour, and Application, have been greater than any other Performers on the Stage. I have not only acted in almoſt all the Plays, but in Farces and Muſical Entertainments; and very frequently two Parts in a Night, even to the Prejudice of my Health. I have been at a very great Expence in Maſters for Singing; for which Article alone, the Managers now give five and ſix Pounds a Week. My additional Expences, in belonging to the Theatre, amount to upwards of one Hundred Pounds a Year, in Clothes, and other Neceſſaries; and

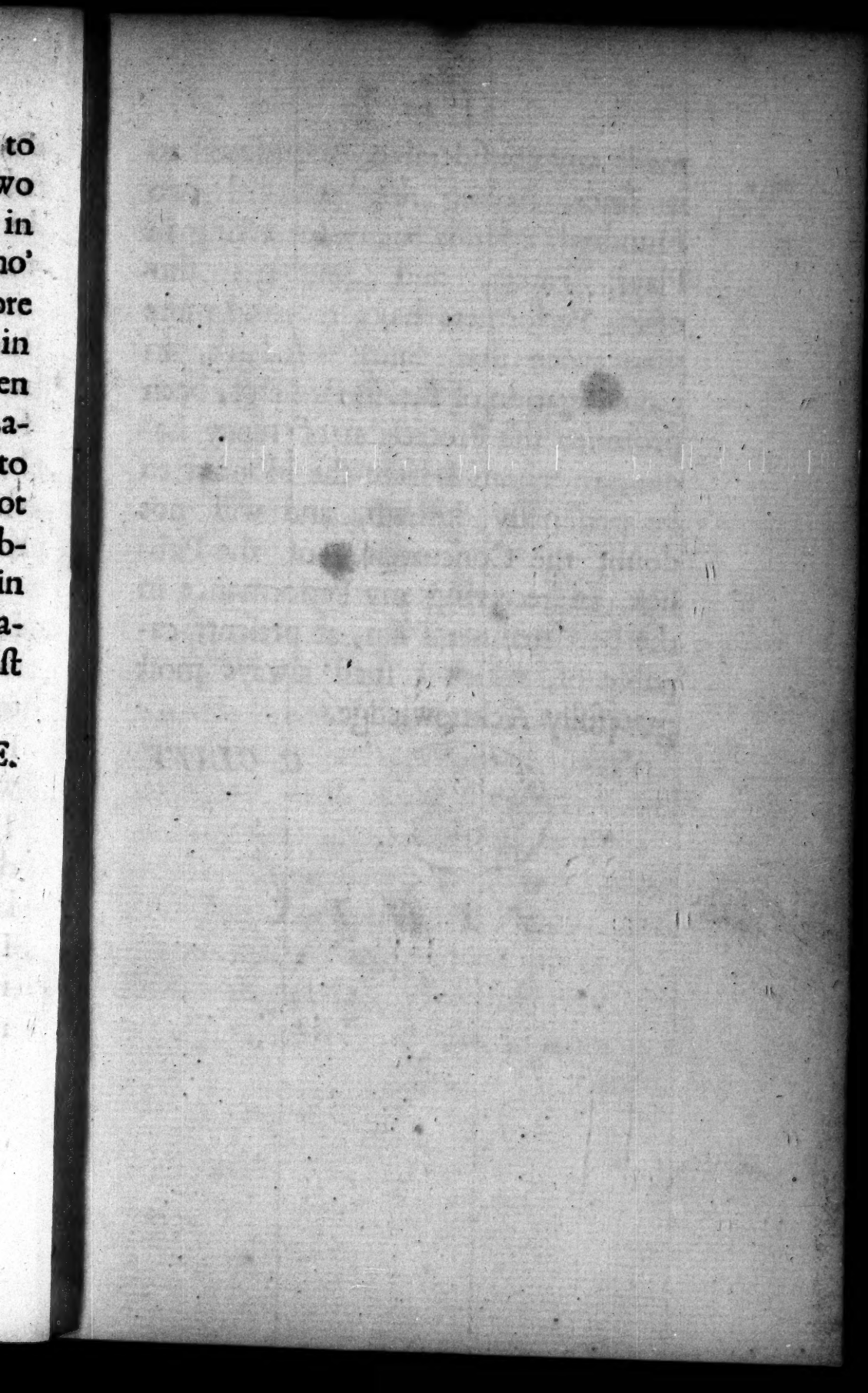
the pretended great Salaries, of ten and twelve Pounds a Week, which have been ſo artfully, and falſly repreſented to the Town, to the Prejudice of the Actors, will, upon Enquiry, appear to be no more than half as much, ſince they performed laſt Seaſon, at the Theatres, very ſeldom above three or four Days a Week; ſo taking in the long Vacation, when there are no Plays at all, to thoſe Days the preſent Managers omit acting, a Salary which appears to be great, will be found, in effect, to be very moderate; and thoſe which are leſs, not a Sufficiency.

I have now finiſhed all I propos'd; I have ſhown in how aggravating a manner, without any Reaſon aſſigned, and at a Time a very conſiderable Sum of Money was owing to me, I have been turn'd out of *Covent-Garden* Theatre. The Manager of *Drury-*

Drury-Lane, tho' he can't but know what juſt Reaſons I had for quitting him, has never apply'd to me to return, nor made the leaſt Excuſe for not paying my Arrears, tho' due ſo long, and after promiſing Payment near a Year, notwithſtanding I have, for many Years, not only endeavour'd, but ſucceeded, in greatly promoting that Manager's Intereſt, as is known to himſelf and his whole Company.

The Reaſon of my taking the Liberty to communicate theſe Things to the Publick, is moſt earneſtly to interceed for their Favour and Protection, from whom I have always met with great Generoſity and Indulgence: For, as I have already declared, in a Letter publiſhed by me laſt Year in the Daily Papers, that I had not a Fortune to ſupport me, independent of my Profeſſion, I doubt not but it will appear, I have not made

made any conſiderable Acquiſition to it ſince, having not received two Hundred Pounds Salary for acting in Plays, Farces, and Singing; tho' other Performers have received more than twice that Sum. I have, in Conſideration of theſe Hardſhips, been promiſed the Protection of many Ladies, to whom I have the Honour to be perſonally known, and will not doubt the Concurrence of the Publick, in receiving my Performance in the beſt manner I am, at preſent, capable of, which I ſhall always moſt gratefully Acknowledge.

C. CLIVE.

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